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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT WEDNESDAY, May 1, 1940.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "MILK." Information from the Bureau of Dairy Industry and the Division of Marketing and Regulatory Work.

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Child Health Day seems a good time to talk about milk. Children certainly need plenty of milk during their growing years. In fact, milk is generally considered the indispensable food for children, although of course they also need a variety of other foods.

Where there isn't money enough for all the foods the family needs, sometimes the children get little or no milk. The food money often goes first for "filler-uppers" like bread and cereals. Bread and cereals are good foods, but you need to add to them protective foods like milk, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. Especially milk. And maybe there's not enough money left to buy the milk.

But the U. S. Department of Agriculture says that now, in several parts of the country, children in homes with a low income are more likely than they were, to get enough milk. This is partly because the Department of Agriculture has developed a low-cost milk program. Where a low-cost milk plan is in effect, it goes along with a Federal marketing agreement. That agreement regulates the handling of milk by establishing minimum prices for the producer. Eligible low-income families are able to buy the milk at less than the regular retail price through a low-cost milk program. Farmers don't get quite as much for this milk as they do for regular sales But the Federal Government provides funds to make the plan work and dairy farmers, milk distributors, and municipal authorities cooperate.

Boston and Chicago are two cities which have low-cost milk plans. People on direct relief in Boston can go to milk stations and buy their milk for 5 cents a quart. If they're on public or private work relief, they pay 7 cents a quart.

In another city, Chicago, low-cost milk sells at milk stations to needy families for 4 cents a quart, or goes to homes for 5 cents a quart. Before long, New Orleans and other cities will have similar plans for selling milk cheaply to families that need it.

But the low-income families are not the only ones who are enjoying more milk because they can buy it more cheaply. This is because of new developments in milk distribution. Dealers who have adopted new methods to cut costs have been able to pass on such savings to the consumer and give the public slightly lower prices without reducing the price paid the dairy farmer. This has taken place in several cities where Federal milk marketing agreement programs operate.

For example, some of you may have seen the new two-quart and gallon containers for milk. They have them in New York City, in St. Louis, and in Chicago, made either of glass or of paper. Milk is sold in these big-sized containers for about 1-1/2 cents or more a quart less than in separate quart bottles. Suppose you have a large family and use 4 quarts of milk, or one gallon, daily. If you buy this amount in one gallon container instead of in 4 quart bottles, you save 6 cents a day. That may not seem very much. But it's $1.80 cents a month, or $21.90 a year on your milk bill.

When the price of milk is high, many a family buys less than its members actually need to be well-nourished. When the price is lower these families can buy enough for everyone to have a generous allowance. And that means the children, particularly.

Another way children are getting more milk than they used to is through their school lunches. That's partly because selling milk in half-pint bottles makes it easy for them to buy just the right amount to go with their lunches. You see the same thing with adults in public eating places. The half pint bottle of milk adorns many a cafeteria tray because of its convenient size.

In city schools there may be a lunch counter where the children buy their luncheon milk, or the parents may make some arrangement with the teacher for the children to get milk in the middle of the morning or the afternoon. In country schools parents may also arrange for the milk, or have their children bring it home in vacuum bottles.

Wherever it is sold, parents are glad to have their children get homogenized (hō'-mo-gen-īzed) milk because the cream stays completely distributed and what the child drinks is whole milk. Homogenizing milk does not add anything or change the food value in any way. It simply blends the cream globules so thoroughly that the cream does not rise to the top of the container. There isn't any cream line. But if the children get the ordinary kind of milk they can be taught to shake the bottle well before pouring the milk out.

All these efforts to provide school children with more and better milk, and to bring cheaper milk to low-income families are good as far as they go. But in spite of them, many children in all parts of the United States are still getting much less milk per day than they need. But how much do they need? Well, nutritionists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say: "A generous allowance is a quart of milk a day for a child, a quart for an expectant or nursing mother, and a pint for other adults." This includes milk used in cooking as well as milk used as a beverage. In some few cases a little less milk than this generous allowance could be used, but families on low-cost diets need every bit of it.

Put in another way, it is wise to spend at least as much for milk, including cream and cheese if they are used, as for meats, poultry, and fish.

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